

Message Text

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SUBJ: IMPLICATIONS OF WORLDWIDE POPULATION GROWTH FOR US
SECURITY AND OVERSEAS INTERESTS

REF: A. STATE 301427 B. STATE 047640

THIS MESSAGE RESPONDS TO REFTEL PARA 4. QUESTIONS AND IS
SUBMITTED IN CABLE FORM BECAUSE DESIRED SUBMISSION DATE
WAS MISSED.

A. POLICIES AND LEADERSHIP

THERE IS NO OFFICIAL WRITTEN GOA POLICY ON FAMILY PLANNING
AND POPULATION. LEADERS IN KEY MINISTRIES DO HAVE OPINIONS
ON FAMILY PLANNING AND POPULATION MATTERS (DESCRIBED BELOW);
HOWEVER, IT MAY BE SAID THAT NEITHER PROPONENTS NOR
OPPONENTS PRESENT THEIR VIEWS PUBLICLY WITH VIGOR OR SPECIFICITY.

(1) PRESIDENT/PRIME MINISTER DAOUD. FROM CERTAIN OF HIS
ACTIONS AND BY REPORTS FROM PERSONS CLOSE TO HIM, WE
BELIEVE HE IS BOTH INFORMED AND INTERESTED IN FAMILY PLANNING
AND POPULATION ISSUES.

(A) MADAME NAFISA MAHMOUD GHAZI NAWAZ, SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE AFGHAN FAMILY GUIDANCE ASSOCIATION (AFGA), REPORTS
CONSISTENTLY THAT THE PRIME MINISTER IS HER MAJOR SOURCE
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OF SUPPORT. SHE IS OF DAOUD'S FAMILY AND HAS ACCESS TO HIM.

THESE REPORTS WERE PARTICULARLY STRONG FOLLOWING DAOUD'S RETURN FROM VISITS TO INDIA AND BANGLADESH IN 1975.

(B) IN JANUARY 1976, DAOUD APPOINTED DR ABDULLAH OMAR MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH. PROMINENT IN OMAR'S RECENT BIOGRAPHY IS FACT THAT HE PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN WRITING THE AFGA CHARTER.

(2) MINISTRY OF PLANNING. OFFICIALS AT SEVERAL LEVELS OF THE MOP HAVE ASSISTED USAID'S EFFORTS TO INCREASE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS. THEY HAVE INTERVENED TO FACILITATE GOA APPROVAL OF USAID'S ASSISTANCE TO AFGA. THEY HAVE SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED STATEMENTS BE INCLUDED IN USAID DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO FAMILY PLANNING AND POPULATION MATTERS.

(3) DR SEKANDER, MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH UNTIL JANUARY 1976. AS IN MANY COUNTRIES WITHOUT AN OFFICIAL FAMILY PLANNING POLICY, THE GOA HAS FELT IT QUOTE SAFE UNQUOTE TO DELEGATE FAMILY PLANNING MATTERS TO HEALTH OFFICIALS ASSUMING THAT EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS COULD BE RUN THROUGH THE MOPH INFRASTRUCTURE. ALSO, THE MINISTER, BY NAME, IS THE PATRON OF AFGA AND MUST CLEAR ITS ACTIVITIES. MINISTER SEKANDER WAS NOT PARTICULARLY HELPFUL AND THERE WAS MINIMAL FAMILY PLANNING ACTION DURING HIS TENURE. HE TALKED OFTEN OF HIS SUPPORT FOR FAMILY PLANNING ACTIVITIES, HOWEVER, IN MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN DONORS.

DR ABDULLAH OMAR, NEW MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH, PARTICIPATED IN FOUNDING OF AFGA, IS SAID TO BE THE AUTHOR OF THE AFGA CHARTER AND SERVED AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF AFGA.

HE HAS, SINCE 1972, HAD AN INTERNATIONAL CAREER WITH WHO. HE IS CONSIDERABLY YOUNGER (46) THAN HIS PREDECESSOR AND IS EXCEPTIONALLY WELL EDUCATED. WE EXPECT MUCH MORE POSITIVE FAMILY PLANNING ACTION UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP.

B. CURRENT PROGRAM-AND ITS EFFECTIVENESS.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH MINISTRY'S FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM IS ALMOST NIL, ALTHOUGH IT IS BEGINNING TO MOVE USAID-PROVIDED CONTRA CEPTIVES INTO ITS HELATH DELIVERY SYSTEM. THE ONLY VIGOROUS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SEMI-GOVERNMENT (VOLUNTARY AGENCY) PROGRAM IS THAT RUN BY AFGA IN THE CITIES AND TOWNS. BY THE END OF 1976, AFGA CLINICS SHOULD BE WITHIN REACH OF ALMOST 15 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION WHICH WE CONSIDER NOT A BAD TRACK RECORD CONSIDERING AFGA HAS ONLY BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR 7 YEARS. AFGA IS ASSISTED BY IPPF OF WHICH IT IS AN AFFILIATE. ITS CURRENT NATIONAL EXPANSION PROGRAM IS ASSISTED BY USAID. DATA ARE BEING COMPILED WHICH WILL PERMIT COST-

EFFECTIVE AND OTHER ANALYSES LATE IN 1976 OR 1977.

PRESENTLY, STAFF AND FACILITIES OF AFGA CENTERS ARE UNDERUTILIZED BUT CLIENTELE GROWING AT RESPECTABLE, ENCOURAGING RATE IN THIS MALE-DOMINATED COUNTRY WHERE RURAL FEMALE LITERACY IS 0.6 PERCENT AND URBAN 3 PERCENT; WHERE, ON AVERAGE, THE MARRIED FEMALE WITH NO CHILDREN WANTS 4 TO 5 CHILDREN; AND WHERE SOCIAL, ESPECIALLY OLD AGE, SECURITY IS DEEMED TO BE AN INCREASING FUNCTION OF THE NUMBER OF OFF-SPRING. WE ASSUME (WITHOUT PROOF) THAT FERTILITY OF FAMILY PLANNING ACCEPTORS WILL FALL AS NUMBER OF ACCEPTORS INCREASES.

AFGA RECEIVES SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT FROM THE GOA, BUT AN ISSUE TO BE RESOLVED IS NEED FOR INCREASED GOA SUPPORT SO THAT AFGA MAY CONTINUE WHEN IPPF AND USAID FINANCING IS REDUCED. DURING NEXT FEW YEARS, HOWEVER, GOA NEEDS USAID'S ASSISTANCE IN EXPANDING AFGA CLINICS INTO PROVINCIAL TOWNS WHICH, WE BELIEVE, IS AN IMPORTANT PROGRAM DESERVING OUR CONTINUING SUPPORT.

USAID PLANS IMPLEMENTATION IN FY 1976 OF A RURAL BASIC HEALTH SERVICES PROJECT. THE NEW, EXPANDED RURAL HEALTH SERVICES WILL PROVIDE A SYSTEM FOR DELIVERY OF FAMILY PLANNING EDUCATION AND SERVICES. ONE ELEMENT OF THIS PROJECT, ALREADY BEGUN, TRAINS FEMALE PARA-MEDICAL WORKERS FROM RURAL AREAS-- PERSONNEL ESSENTIAL TO SSURE ACCESS OF WOMEN PATIENTS TO HEALTH CENTERS. RELATED ASSISTANCE IN FAMILY PLANNING IS FROM UNFPA (DEMOGRAPHIC ACTIVITIES), AND UNICEF (ASSISTANCE FOR AN EXPANDED RURAL HEALTH SERVICE).

C. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
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RAPID POPULATION GROWTH USUALLY INCREASES NEED FOR FOOD IMPORTS, REDUCES PER CAPITA DOMESTIC SAVINGS AND INVEST-ENT AND IMPACTS ADERSELY UPON A COUNTRY'S BALANCE OF PAYMENTS-- IN SHORT, IS DETRIMENTAL TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. WE WOULD EXPECT THSE RESULTS IN AFGHANISTAN, SINCE POPULATION GROWTH WILL MOST LIKELY OUTRUN DEVELOPMENT GAINS IN THE NEAR TERM BEFORE FAMILY PLANNING ANDOTHER POPULATION CONTROL FACTORS CAN TAKE HOLD SUFFICIENTLY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KABUL 1562

D. SOCIO-ECONOMIC REVELOPMENT

HOST COUNTRY HAS INFANT MORTALITY RATE OF PERHAPS 230 PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS. THUS EXISTS A POTENTIAL FOR DRAMATIC DROP, A POTENTIAL THAT WILL LIKELY BE REALIZED PRIOR TO DROP IN FERTILITY RATE. IT DOES NOT BODE WELL FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IF FERTILITY RATE CANNOT BE BROUGHT DOWN WITH IMPROVED HEALTH SERVICES. CONSEQUENCE WILL BE SHARP INCREASE IN DEPENDENCY RATIO. RALATIVELY FEWER ECONOMICALLY PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE HAVE TO PROVIDE FOODS AND SERVICES TO RELATIVELY MORE PEOPLE. NEED FOR EVEN MORE SOCIAL SERVICES (MAINLY SCHOOLING, BUT ALSO PUBLIC HEALTH) WILL BE EXPLOSIVE. HIGHLY LIKELY ALSO THAT URBAN MIGRATION WILL BE ACCELERATED WITH ALL THE ATTENDANT PROBLEMS THAT THIS PHENOMENON CAUSES.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.

PRACTICALLY ALL RANGE LAND IN AFGHANISTAN IS PUBLIC DOMAIN. STATE STATUES RESTRICT EXPANSION OF DRYLAND CROPPING INTO UNCULTIVATED AREAS ALTHOUGH IT IS A NEAR IMPOSSIBILITY TO ENFORCE MEASURE. THUS, SOME SLOW ENCROACHMENT OF HIGH-RISK CROPLAND ONTO LOW YIELDING RANGELAND. ALTHOUGH UNCERTAIN OF SERIOUSNESS OF PROBLEM, ITS OCCURENCE DOES INCREASE WIND AND WATER EROSION, SILTING AND MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS OF IRRIGATION SYSTEMS. STUDIES INDICATE BULK OF RANGELAND (IN ABSENCE OF EFFECTIVE RANGE MANAGEMENT AND ESTABLISHMENT OF HIGHER YIELDING GRASSES) IS NOT NOW CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING AN INCREASED NUMBER OF LIVESTOCK. RANGES PRODUCE LOW-YIELDING GRASSES, ARE

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OVERGRAZED SINCE CONTROLLED GRAZING NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE TO ENFORCE. OUR GUESS IS, INCREASED POPULATION PRESSURE ON LAND LIKELY TO RESULT IN IMPROVEMENT IN SITUATION BY ENCOURAGING, OVER LONGER RUN PUBLIC PROGRAMS AIMED AT ESTABLISHING HIGHER YIELDING GRASSES, RENOVATING RANGELAND AND IMPLEMENTING RANGE MANAGEMENT. THEREFORE, OVER TIME, INCREASED POPULATION PRESSURE ON LAND NOT LIKELY TO ACCELERATE OVER-GRAZING, SOIL EROSION, WATER RUNOFF, FLOODS, ETC. POPULATION PRESSURES WILL INCREASE NEED FOR IRRIGATION WATER. RIVERS SUPPLYING SUCH WATER ALSO RELIED UPON BY NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES TO HELP MEET THEIR WATER NEEDS. INCREASED DEMAND FOR WATER TO MEET NEEDS OF GROWING POPULATION LIKELY TO INTENSIFY ALREADY SENSITIVE POLITICAL ISSUE WITHIN AND BETWEEN COUNTRIES.

F. POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES.

AS NOTED IN E. ABOVE, INCREASED WATER NEEDS OF A GROWING POPULATION ARE LIKELY TO INCREASE TENSION BETWEEN COUNTRIES RELYING UPON COMMON WATER SOURCES. POPULATION GROWTH ALSO CAUSES MORE RAPID DEPLETION OF IRREPLACEABLE NATURAL RESOURCES (E.G., NATURAL GAS, PETROLEUM, PHOSPHATE AND POTASSIUM DEPOSITS) REQUIRED TO PRODUCE COMMERCIAL FERTILIZERS WHICH CURRENT FOOD-PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY REQUIRES TO FEED THE WORLD. AS SHORTAGES BECOME MORE ACUTE, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT REGIONAL TENSION WILL INCREASE. SAME APPLIES TO ENERGY AND OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES SUCH AS COAL AND IRON ORE DEPOSITS.

G. SOME SUGGESTIONS

1. MOST AFGHANS HAVE NOT IDEA AT ALL OF WHAT A COMPOUND GROWTH RATE OF SAY THREE PERCENT ANNUALLY IMPLIES FOR THE ABSOLUTE POPULATION COUNT A CENTURY FROM NOW; NOR THE TREMENDOUS IMPACT THAT ONLY A ONE-HALF OF ONE PERCENT DIFFERENTIAL CAN HAVE ON THE ABSOLUTE POPULATION OVER 100 YEARS. NOR HAS THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT FOCUSED ON ORGANIZATIONAL AND BUDGET IMPLICATIONS OF INCREASED POPULATION IN TERMS OF FOOD, JOBS, HOUSING, SCHOOLS, PUBLIC SERVICES, ETC. THIS IS THE KIND OF INFORMATION THAT SHOULD BE PUBLICIZED TIME AND AGAIN WITHIN COUNTRIES BY ALL DONOR GOVERNMENTS/ORGANIZATIONS.

2. POPULATION WILL GROW AND POPULATION PROBLEMS DEVELOP.

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LATTER CAN BE MITIGATED. MUCH MORE ATTENTION NEEDS BE GIVEN TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY STUDIES WHICH ADDRESS QUESTION OF MODEL FARMS -- CROPS, FARMING PRACTICES, ETC. MUCH SOCIO-ECONOMIC MISCHIEF CONTINUES TO BE PERPETUATED BY THE CONCEPT THAT THERE IS SOME OPTIMUM-SIZED FAMILY FARM IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WHEN CONCEPT DOES NOT TAKE ACCOUNT OF LANDLESS FARMERS AND URBAN MIGRATION.

3. MORE RESEARCH NEED ON HOW TO INCREASE FOOD WITHOUT
MAJOR RECOURSE TO HIGH-ENERGY, HIGH NATUAL RESOURCE
CONTENT TECHNOLOGY, E.G., FERTILIZER.

4. HOW MAY DONORS BE MORE EFFECTIVE? DONORS CAN INCREASE
EFFECTIVENESS AS RESULTS OF THE NATIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY
(USAID-STATE UNIVERSITY NEW YORK, 1971-75) ARE ANALYZED
AND INTERPRETED FOR THE GOA. FOR FIRST TIME AFGHANISTAN HAS
RELIABLE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ITS POPULATION. DONORS SUCH AS
IPPF, IBRD, UNDP, ETC. SHOULD USE THEIR INFLUENCE ON A
COORDINATED BASIS, TO PERSUADE GOA LEADERSHIP THAT AFGHANISTAN
IS NOW ON THRESHHOLD OF POPULATION EXPLOSION, I.E., A
RAPIDLY DECLINING MORTALITY AND CONTINUED HIGH FERITLITY.
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